

# PDE & the instructional coach

TALKING POINTS FOR COACH CONVERSATIONS  
WITH ADMINISTRATORS

Instructional Coaching in PA is not a  
cookie cutter position...

- many different 'jobs'
- different levels of teacher  
interaction
- different levels of administrative  
support

Instructional Coaching in PA is not a  
cookie cutter position...BUT

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instructional coaches all have  
relatively common views of what helps  
make them effective in increasing  
student achievement

- Have time to work directly with teachers
- Being non-evaluative and confidential
- Using appropriate data
- Working with proven instructional practices



**pennsylvania**  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

### **Job Description for Coaches in Pennsylvania Coaching Initiatives**

#### ***Role of the Coach***

The coach serves as part of their school's leadership team, providing job-imbedded and ongoing professional development for teachers, staff, and administration. He/she provides support to the principal in data analysis and professional development decision-making. He/she provides professional development and guidance for teachers to improve their content knowledge and instructional strategies. Overall, the job of the coach is to build the capacity of the school and its teachers to meet the learning needs of all students. The coach's goal is to ensure that school staff acquires the understanding and skills to:

- 1) enhance instructional practices at the classroom level and
- 2) raise the level of student achievement.

The effective coach spends the majority of the time working in classrooms with teachers (e.g. modeling, observing, co-teaching). The coach plays a very strong role in the analysis and utilization of student achievement data to impact instructional decision-making. He/she should not, however, be responsible for the administration of assessments, collection of assessment data, or management of data systems. The focus of coach's work is to help teachers learn to use data for instructional planning that will have a positive impact on student achievement. In that role, the coach helps the teacher learn how to administer and interpret various assessment tools.

The coach may facilitate teacher study groups in which they analyze student work and lesson plans and plan for the enhancement of instructional strategies. The coach's analysis of student work and teaching and learning data will inform what occurs during coaching sessions with individual teachers and in the teacher study groups.

The roles and responsibilities of the coach include:

- Participating in all required coach professional development. The coach is charged with acquiring the knowledge, skills, technology skills, and instructional strategies necessary to effectively impact the instructional practices of the teachers that are coached. He/she must remain knowledgeable about current and past research in the specific content area and other pedagogies relevant to the coaching role.
- Identifying school teaching and learning needs, barriers and weaknesses by analyzing student data, and organizing and implementing problem-solving actions with teachers;

## TALKING POINTS FOR COACH CONVERSATIONS WITH ADMINISTRATORS

- PDE Job description...
- PDE White Paper on Coaching



## • School/District Based Leadership:

- Assist and serve on leadership teams within the school/district
- Bridge the gap between and among school programs
- Facilitate alignment of individual goals and school goals
- Build school capacity by encouraging and supporting teacher leadership

## • Instructional Leadership:

- Provide support, mentoring and assistance to classroom teachers
- Serve as a resource for identification of instructional strategies, materials, and interventions to address diverse learning needs
- Conduct demonstration lessons
- Assist teachers in designing, delivering, and assessing instruction
- Collaborate with teacher teams to set goals to improve instruction and to solve problems that limit student achievement
- Observe instruction and provide feedback as support for teachers



## 👤 Assessment:

- 👤 Assist teachers and grade-level teams in the analysis and use of assessment data to inform instruction (Keystone, PSSA, PVAAS, eMetrics) through application of the data framework
- 👤 Meet regularly with teams and/or principal to review student assessment data and assess progress toward grade-level goals
- 👤 Guide teachers in the use of assessment data to adjust instructional practice
- 👤 Guide teachers in the use of assessment data to plan professional development

## • Professional Development:

- Provide on-site staff development to ensure teacher knowledge of academic standards, content, curriculum, instruction, assessment, and intervention strategies
- Collaborate with teachers, administrators and other personnel to identify professional development needs
- Stay current in the areas of content, curriculum design and research-based instructional practices through professional development opportunities

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## As the sum up succinctly in that white paper:

- “(The coach’s) roles and responsibilities must be clearly defined and strongly focused on the improvement of instruction and student achievement. Their role must remain supportive and never be confused with the supervisory or evaluative role of the principal. Administrative support is a critical element to the success of coaching efforts. As effective facilitators of adult learning, coaches lead teachers in reflective and inquiry-based professional development that advances collective leadership, continuous improvement of instructional practices, and improved student achievement.”

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